

# Get Answers! Community Questions for EPA

Record EPA Answers Here, June 25, 2013

1. Can the EPA transfer its jurisdiction of the radioactive Area 1 and Area 2 of Operable Unit 1 of the West Lake Landfill to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Formerly Utilized Site Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) for cleanup since the radioactive wastes originated from the purification of uranium for nuclear weapons?

**YES**

**NO**

2. West Lake Landfill sits in a floodplain, in an urban area, and in a seismic zone. Recently, several tornadoes have come close to touching down at the landfill. And there is a "subsurface smoldering event" (landfill fire) in close proximity. The risks of this location are levee failure, flooding, earthquake, tornado, and the smoldering event. Has the EPA developed a risk assessment that considers all these disasters or multiple events impacting the spread of radioactive wastes at the West Lake Landfill?

**YES**

**NO**

3. What did EPA consider in the risk assessment that was conducted?

☐ Earthquake  
☐ Groundwater movement  
☐ Flood  
☐ Levee failure  
☐ Landfill fire  
☐ Surface fire  
☐ Tornado  
☐ Air borne contamination risks  
☐ Other

☐ How close are homes  
☐ How close are schools/daycare centers/universities  
☐ How close are hospitals  
☐ How close are Earth City workers, hotels, and businesses  
☐ How close are Missouri River  
☐ Exposure to Wildlife  
☐ Earth City waterways/canals  
☐ How close are event venues (BMAC, Verizon, casinos)  
☐ How close are airport runways

4. If the landfill fire, or "subsurface smoldering event" reaches the radioactive material in the contaminated area called Operable Unit-1 (next to the area known as the north quarry), will radioactive particles or gases be emitted?

**YES**

**NO**

5. The EPA's 2008 plan for West Lake Landfill (known as its Record of Decision) makes numerous assumptions that the radioactive wastes will not move in groundwater. However, recent data show that groundwater monitoring wells beyond the area previously considered to be radioactive now exhibit radioactivity above background levels. Some even have surprising detectable levels of Uranium-235 in them. Is the EPA conducting or planning to do off-site groundwater testing?

**YES**

**NO**

If yes, can the EPA provide the data?

If no, why not?

If no, how can EPA claim the radioactive contamination is not moving off-site?

6. Besides on-site groundwater monitoring, is the EPA collecting soil samples to improve its understanding of the West Lake Landfill and the radioactive materials that are present?

**YES**

**NO**

7. Is there a "red line" or a clear indicator to trigger the removal of the radioactive wastes if the smoldering landfill event continues its apparent progression north towards the radioactive wastes in Operable Unit-1?

**YES**

**NO**

8. How can the EPA conclude that the radioactive materials are "contained" based on the ASPECT plane, which only measured gamma radiation up to one foot deep, while the radioactive wastes are dominated by alpha and beta radiation emitters (not gamma) and are buried up to 15 feet deep in a landfill with no liner to prevent groundwater contamination?

9. Are there any examples of a cap of the design that EPA proposed in 2006 withstanding a direct hit by a tornado of F4 force or better?

**YES**

**NO**

10. Has the timeline for an EPA decision on the West Lake Landfill been influenced by the adjacent landfill fire?

**YES**

**NO**

11. The EPA Supplemental Feasibility Study of September 2011 recommends against building a containment wall between Operable Unit 1 where the radioactive material lies and the North Quarry. The State of Missouri's landfill fire expert is recommending a wall be built there to prevent the fire from reaching the radioactive material. Are you working with the state to resolve this clear conflict?

**YES**

**NO**

12. Has the EPA participated in emergency response planning with state and local officials regarding the landfill fire and the radioactive wastes at the West Lake landfill?

**YES**

**NO**

If yes, can the EPA provide the data?

If no, why not?

13. Was the radioactively contaminated 8,700 tons of leached barium sulfate from Latty Avenue mixed with 38,000 tons to 39,000 tons of "clean material" as stated in the Responsiveness Summary (page 13)?

**YES**

**NO**

If 'yes', can we have the documentation of the 'clean material'?

If 'no', then what was the leached barium sulfate mixed with before it was dumped at West Lake?

14. Has the EPA considered the health effects of long-term (10-40 years) exposure to the "low, safe" levels of radiation and other contaminants being released into the air daily by the landfill?

**YES**

**NO**

15. How has the EPA considered in its plans the impact on property values and quality of life for those living, working, and owning property in the adjacent areas?

16. Since landfill fires can start spontaneously from unknown causes, if this fire is extinguished, what will prevent another fire from starting within the nuclear waste?

## CommUnity

The coming months will be challenging. We have much to learn as residents of this area. We recognize that residents in our community will not agree on everything. However, we know that we all want to keep our families safe. And we want answers so we can make decisions for ourselves, our businesses and our families. Together we can achieve these goals.

## Will you join us?

**Connect on Facebook: West Lake Landfill Group**  
**Watch for the website.**

Sincerely,

Bob Nowlin, Spanish Village  
Jay Black, Autumn Lakes  
Dawn Chapman, 4<sup>th</sup> Ward-Maryland Hts.  
Karen Nickel, Near Pattonville High School